

Index to Sustainably and Efficiently Invest In Transportation (RAISE IT) Act.

The federal gas tax, unchanged since 1993, has lost more than 40 percent of its purchasing power due to inflation and rising fuel efficiency. Stuck at 18.4 cents a gallon for 24 years, the gas tax has led to more than a decade of uncertainty in the federal transportation program, a perennially insolvent Highway Trust Fund, and more than \$140 billion borrowed from the general Treasury fund to maintain current, inadequate surface transportation funding levels. The Highway Trust Fund will run a \$15 billion deficit this year and will be bankrupt by 2021.

Raising the gas tax, supported by a broad coalition of stakeholders from the AFL-CIO to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, AAA, truckers, and transit, would fix the Highway Trust Fund and provide certainty to commuters, businesses, and local governments that count on a strong, continuing federal partnership. The RAISE IT Act would index the federal gas and diesel taxes to inflation and phase in a 15 cent a gallon increase over three years, generating \$210 billion over the next ten years.

Congress should follow the lead of the eight Republican-led states that raised gas taxes in the last two years. Countless editorial boards, transportation and economic policy experts, and blue ribbon panels like Simpson-Bowles Commission, all call for an increase in the federal gas tax. In the words of President Reagan, who more than doubled the gas tax in 1983, "the cost to average motorist will be small, but the benefit to our transportation system will be immense."

ADVANCED CONCEPTS AND SIMULATION PROGRAM IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017

HON. DARREN SOTO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2017

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I want to make a statement regarding the passage of H.R. 1301, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2017. In the 114th Congress, an amendment was offered and accepted by voice vote to H.R. 5293, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2017, that moved \$5 million from the Operation and Maintenance, Defense—Wide account to the Research, Development, Test and Evaluation, Army account's Advanced Concepts and Simulation program. H.R. 1301, maintained a \$3 million increase to the Research, Development, Test and Evaluation, Army account's Advanced Concepts and Simulation program.

These funds allow universities to focus on advancing component technologies required for real time modeling and simulation training. A promising use of this program is the development of a more effective protocol for treating combat-related post-traumatic stress disorder for active duty, retired, and discharged personnel and their families. The use of modeling and simulation technology has enabled new innovative and immersive therapies to be developed, which can extend trauma management therapy protocol.

I support the use of modeling and simulation and thank my colleagues for their shared support.

TRIBUTE TO NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLYMAN MICHAEL DEN DEKKER

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2017

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give tribute to a colleague and dear friend, New York State Assemblyman Michael Den Dekker. I have long admired his devotion to improving the lives of others. I know I am not alone in this admiration. Everyone who has worked with Mike has boundless respect for him, and truly enjoys knowing him. He is cheerful, he is kind, and he is a friend to all he meets.

Mike and I go back decades. On September 12, 2001, I went down to Ground Zero for the first time. The past twenty four hours had been some of the most harrowing of my life. As I stepped out of the car, the first thing I laid my eyes on was Mike Den Dekker. He was there, broom in hand, cleaning up. No other story more clearly shows what kind of man Mike is. He does not shy away from hard work, he does not waver in his devotion to others. I have nothing but the deepest respect for my longtime friend and colleague.

Of course, Mike is no stranger to tough work. He worked his way up in the sanitation department, eventually becoming supervisor, and going on to serve the city as a public information officer at the Office of Emergency Management and a facilities manager for the New York City Council, until he ran for State Assembly in 2008. Since then, he has fought tirelessly to improve the lives of New Yorkers and to create a state where everyone has the chance to work hard and succeed.

His work is being recognized on March 13, 2017, as he receives the Charles Stewart Parnell award from the American Irish Legislators. Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate him and declare my joy in his receiving of this award. The award is given each year to an Irish legislator in commemoration of Charles Stewart Parnell, the uncrowned king of Ireland, a brave soul who fought for the people. Mike is unwavering in his devotion to others, and has spent his whole life making his community safer, cleaner, healthier, and happier. It is only natural he should receive such an award to commemorate a lifetime of work. As we Irish say, luck may rise with you, Maith thú, and Go n-eirí an t-ádh leat, Michael.

RECOGNIZING JOHN CREIGHTON ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2017

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize John Creighton on the occasion of his retirement after 33 years of dedicated public service as a Deputy District Attorney for Alameda County.

John's life of service began in 1971, when he enlisted in the U.S. Army. He served in the Intelligence Corps, operating out of the U.S. Army headquarters in Vietnam providing counterintelligence work. In 1973, he worked in

Psychological Operations at JFK Special Forces Center at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, eventually being honorably discharged with the rank of Sergeant in 1974.

In 1979, he enrolled at the University of California at Berkeley, and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. John would go on to receive his Juris Doctorate from the University of San Francisco School of Law in 1984. During his time in college, John worked as a union laborer, truck driver, auto mechanic and paralegal.

In 1984, John was hired by the Alameda County District Attorney's (DA) Office in Oakland. John's distinguished career spanned over three decades, and he prosecuted hundreds of cases, including murder, domestic violence, sexual assault and major narcotics trafficking.

In the DA's office, John was tasked as a Gang Violence Prosecutor, handling complex gang-related felonies at all stages of prosecution, as well as serving as a DA representative to the nationally recognized Gang Intervention Program. John received the Neighborhood Champion Award in 2014 for his work.

John not only served his community in the courtroom, but also devotes his time as a soccer referee with the Jack London Youth Soccer League. Additionally, John previously served as a member on the Board of Directors for both Planned Parenthood Golden Gate and Golden Gate Community Health.

John has fostered lasting, productive partnerships in the East Bay and laid the foundation for others to succeed. His legacy is one of selfless service and tireless justice and compassion, leaving our community and nation safer for all of us. I wish to congratulate John on a long and distinguished career, and I wish him health and happiness in retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2017

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I regrettably missed votes on Wednesday, March 8, 2017. I had intended to vote No on Roll Call vote 129, No on vote 130, No on vote 131, Yes on vote 132, No on vote 133, Yes on vote 134, Yes on vote 135, Yes on vote 136, Yes on vote 137.

RECOGNIZING LYNN BROWN

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2017

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge Veteran Services Officer Lynn P. Brown for being selected as Employee of the Quarter for the entire State of Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs Agency. VSO Brown has been with the agency for nearly 26 years.

VSO Lynn Brown grew up in a family of eight boys in Effingham, Illinois. He graduated from Effingham High School in 1962 and joined the Army in 1966. After training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, and Fort Campbell, Kentucky, Lynn was stationed overseas at